

# Modality and point of view in media discourse

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## 概要

本稿は、メディア・テキストにおけるモダリティーと視点、そして文体的な特徴との関連について考察するものである。P. Simpson (1993) のモデルに修正を加えたものを理論的枠組みとして使用する。Simpson のモデルは元来小説分析のために考えられたものであるが、本稿では新聞記事の分析や政治ディスコースの分析などにも応用できることを提示する。Simpson のモデルによると、モダリティーと視点のタイプによって、9 パターンの語りのモードが存在するという。まずは、大きく内側からの視点 (internal point of view)、外側からの視点 (external point of view) に基づくものと、分類される。内側からの視点は第一人称 (*I, we*) で語られるものをいう。外側からの視点は、第3者 (narrator) の視点によるものと、登場人物のなかの回顧者 (reflector) の視点によるものとさらに分けられる。これら3種類の視点には、それぞれに、顕影法 (positive shading)、陰影法 (negative shading)、そして中影法 (neutral shading) が存在し、合計9種類のパターンとなる。顕影法 (positive shading) は、高位の価値 (high value) を持つ束縛的モダリティー (deontic modality)、評価や感情を表す形容詞や副詞 (evaluative and emotive adjectives and adverbs)、感情を表す動詞 (*verba sentiendi*) が多用されていること

を特徴とする。これに対して、陰影法 (negative shading) は、低位の価 (low value) を持つ認識的モダリティー (epistemic modality) や、第三者的距離を表す語句 (words of estrangement) が際立って使用されていることに特徴づけられる。中影法 (neutral shading) は、モダリティーがなく、定言的断定 (categorical assertions) が多用され、評価や感情を表す形容詞、副詞および感情を表す動詞があまり使用されないモードである。

データとして、ブッシュ大統領によるイラク政策についてのスピーチ、政府が、子供の輸血を、手術時など緊急の際に、宗教的事情に関わらず義務付けた新聞記事、そしてヒル・東アジア太平洋国務次官補による対北朝鮮の非核化交渉に関する記事を分析する。モダリティー、人称、動詞、形容詞、副詞の分析により以下のことが確認された。ブッシュ大統領によるイラク政策についてのスピーチにおいては、内側からの視点で顕影法 (positive shading) による語り技法が使われている。子供の輸血を義務付けた新聞記事では、外側からの視点で、顕影法 (positive shading) によるレトリックが使用されている。最後の、ヒル・東アジア太平洋国務次官補による対北朝鮮の非核化交渉に関する記事は、外側からの視点で、陰影法 (negative shading) により書かれているが、最後の箇所では、顕影法 (positive shading) に転移されていることが見受けられた。このように、ひとつひとつのテキストを考察することで、確かに視点、モダリティー、文体的特徴が密接に関連していることが結論付けられた。

Key words: commitment; style; perspective; interpersonal function

## 1. Introduction

This paper examines some spoken and printed media texts in journalism and characterizes their major stylistic and linguistic features. A special focus is placed upon the aspect of modality as related to point of view. Modality expresses the mode within which the propositional content of a sentence is presented (as certain, reliable, or obligatory) and it functions to regulate interpersonal relations. Point of view indicates a particular way of conceptualizing and refers to worldview. In relation to, or as a part of, modal functions, the following issues are considered: point of view, deontic and epistemic modality, evaluative adjectives and adverbs, and *verba sentiendi*.

The paper consists of a theoretical part and an application part. In the theoretical part, first the term “modality” is defined; this is followed by a discussion of the relationship between modality and point of view, using the model proposed by Simpson (1993). Several patterns of points of view adopted in the narrative will be introduced. In the application part of the paper, I will apply this theoretical model, originally developed as a tool for analyzing fictional stories, to the analysis of some texts from media discourse, including a political speech and newspaper texts, to demonstrate that the distinctive patterns of modality and point of view are adopted in media discourse, too.

## 2. Modality : Basic Concepts

Modality is a broad expression of a speaker's attitude toward the situation or event described by a sentence or in regard to the proposition expressed by the sentence. It is an important linguistic tool for realizing the interpersonal function and expressing social roles between the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader (Halliday 1994; Halliday and Hasan 1989). Modality can be both epistemic and deontic (Palmer 1979, 1986, 1990, 2001, 2003)<sup>1)</sup> Epistemic modality indicates the means by which speakers/writers express judgment on the truth of the propositions they utter/write. Deontic modality is concerned with the criterion by which speakers/writers decide which future events are necessary, possible, desirable, etc. Most modal expressions can be used in both ways. For example, there are ambiguities in the interpretations of the sentence, "Peter must have a bath every day." (See Halliday 1970 and 1976, for details).

There are degrees of certainty, probability, or obligation in modal operators respectively. They are called values, and these can be classified into high, median, and low values, as shown in the following table of modal operators.

**Table 1. Values in modality**

High value	must, should, ought to, need to, has to, is to
Median value	will, would, shall
Low value	may, might, can, could

(Halliday 1994: 362; Tatsuki 2006: 76)

There are various other ways of expressing modality, or expressing different degrees of the speaker or writer's commitment to the proposition, than through auxiliary verbs; adverbs (e. g., *supposedly*, *possibly*), adjectives (e. g., *probable*, *likely*), nouns (e.g., *likelihood*, *possibility*), and verbs (e.g., *wish*, *reckon*, *regret*) can also be used. Table 2 schematizes the relationships between modal systems and the non-linguistic concepts that each of the modal systems realizes.

The terms boulomaic modality and perception modality in Table 2 are used as follows. Boulomaic modality, as a subcategory of deontic modality, expresses the desire or wish of the speaker, as in *I wish...*, *I hope...*, *I regret...* Perception modality is a supplement to epistemic modality, and expresses the degree of commitment to the validity of a proposition, based on some reference to human perception (Perkins 1983, cited in Simpson 1993: 50). An example of perception modality is, *It is obvious that they don't like each other*, *Apparently she's planning to marry him*.

**Table 2. The relationship between the modal system and non-linguistic concepts**

Modal system		Non-linguistic concepts represented
Deontic	—————→	Obligation, duty, and commitment
Boulomaic	—————→	Desire
Epistemic	—————→	Knowledge, belief, and cognition
Perception	—————→	Perception

(Simpson 1993: 51)

A difference in the degree or value of certainty, probability, or perceptual commitment leads to a different attitudinal stance on that part of speaker or writer. Let us next turn to the problem of point of view in relation to modality.

### **3. Modality and point of view**

This section discusses the relationship between modality and point of view. The basic concept of point of view is introduced, and this is followed by a discussion of internal and external points of view. The argument is then developed to present several different modes of points of view.

#### **3. 1. Point of view as an indicator of an authorial attitude**

In the simplest sense, point of view indicates a speaker's or writer's particular style of conceptualizing a worldview. No text or fiction can be totally objective or value-free (cf. Fowler 1977 : 76). It is the writer's point of view, "angle of vision," "angle of telling," perspective, or authorial interest that determines the essence of a story's style and that provides the story with its particular "feel" and "colo(u)r" (Simpson 1993 : 5). The studies of point of view were originally developed as a tool for analyzing narratives or fictional stories (cf. Uspensky 1973; Genette 1983). The theoretical model of point of view, nevertheless, may have wider applications in other fields as well. In this study I use the model in an analysis of spoken and printed media discourse. Two basic concepts are of particular importance: internal point of view

and external point of view.

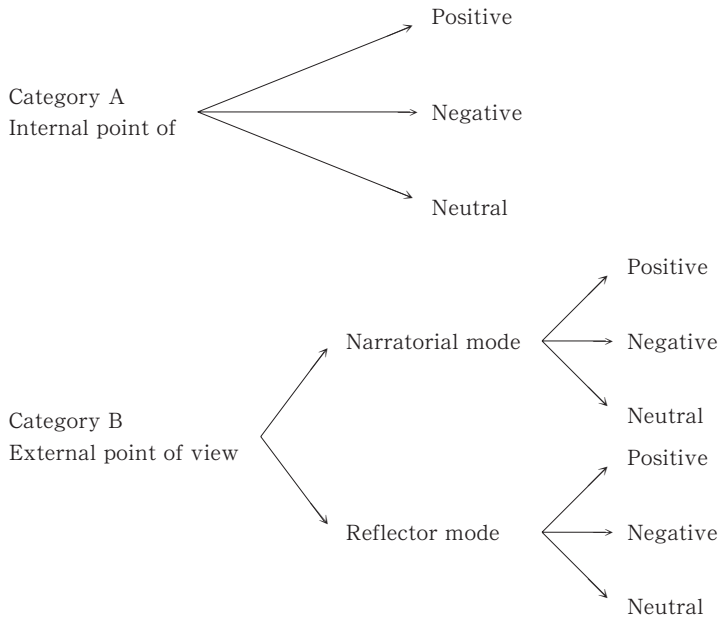
### 3. 2. Internal and external points of view

Internal focalization represents that the story is mediated by the first-person narrator's view, and often represents a subjective, fixed point of view, since the source of the narration is the center of consciousness of a narrator or a certain character. This viewing stance is characterized by the use of first-person pronouns (*I, we*) and *verba sentiendi*. *Verba sentiendi* are words that express feelings, thoughts, and perceptions, e. g., *feel, suffer, or think*.<sup>2)</sup> External focalization suggests an objective, neutral, and panchronic stance outside the consciousness of participants involved in the story, from which the events and characters are described (Simpson 1993: 39).

### 3. 3. The model of modality and point of view propounded by Simpson

Modality and point of view have a close relationship. Simpson systematized the relationship between these two topics by developing Fowler's original model of point of view. According to Simpson (1993: 46), "much of the 'feel' of a text is attributable to the type of point of view or authorial interests it exhibits." Figure 1 is a slightly simplified and revised model of point of view realized by modality, as developed by Simpson.

Category A stories represent stories written with an internal point



**Figure 1. A model of point of view**  
(cf. Simpson 1993: 56)

of view and category B stories indicate stories written with an external point of view. Simpson (1993) uses the terms “homodiegetic” and “heterodiegetic” instead, with slightly different connotations from “internal point of view” and “external point of view,” respectively. Category A stories, Category B narratorial mode stories, and Category B reflector mode stories (explained below) are subdivided further on the basis of three patterns of modality: “positive, negative, and neutral shadings.” These produce a total of 9 types of stories. The technical terms are taken from Simpson (1993) and the explanation of each category follows. The term “shading” is used here as equivalent to



“mode” (i.e., a particular style).

Positive shading stories are stories in which deontic and boulomaic modalities of high values are abundantly used, supplemented by *verba sentiendi* (see section 3.2). Hence, the general flow of discourse of this type is binding, obligatory, assertive, and strong. Negative shading stories are characterized by the use of weaker epistemic and perception modalities of low values, and by words denoting alienation and uncertainty; this creates weaker connotations in discourse as opposed to positive shading stories. Finally, neutral shading stories are stories without modality or modal judgment; use of *verba sentiendi* and evaluative adverbs and adjectives is suppressed; the story is mostly told through “categorical assertions” (i.e., “something is or is not”) (Lyons 1977: 763, 809). Categorical assertions are “epistemically non-modal” assertions or propositions (Simpson 1993: 49) and express the strongest degree of a speaker’s commitment to the factuality of the proposition. For example, “it is snowing” is epistemically stronger than the modalized “it must be snowing” (Lyons, 1977: 808–809). As a result, the style of neutral shading stories exhibits an uncommitted and detached connotation. Table 3 summarizes some distinctive features of each of these three shadings: positive, negative, and neutral; it is followed by explanations of each of the shading patterns.

**Table 3. Characteristics of each of the three shading patterns**

Shading type	Prominent features
Positive shading	deontic, boulomaic systems forefronted; <i>verba sentiendi</i> found
Negative shading	epistemic and perception systems foregrounded; generalized “words of estrangement” (words expressing uncertainty and alienation, e.g., <i>maybe</i> , <i>perhaps</i> , etc.) supplemented
Neutral shading	Unmodalized categorical assertions dominant; few <i>verba sentiendi</i> and evaluative adjectives and adverbs

(Simpson 1993: 75)

**Category A: Positive shading**

Category A positive stories are characterized by the rich use of the high values of deontic and boulomaic modalities of obligation, desire, duties, and opinions (*we must...*, *I want...*) and evaluative adjectives and adverbs (e.g., *happily*, *terrible*, *meaningfully*), and *verba sentiendi*. By contrast, the use of epistemic and perception systems are rare (*perhaps*, *maybe*, *evidently*, *might have been*). In other words, the use of “words of estrangement,” or the more alienating forms of epistemic and perception modality (i. e., low-value modality), are suppressed (Simpson, 1993: 56–58).

**Category A: Negative shading**

Category A stories with negative shading are characterized by the use of weaker epistemic and perception modalities than are found in Category A stories with positive shading. This type of point of view presents the following linguistic features: epistemic modal auxiliaries, modal adverbs, and modal lexical verbs such as *I*

*wonder, I think, I suppose*; perception adverbs such as *evidently, perhaps, apparently*; human perception verbs such as *it looked like (as if), it seemed, it appears*. Because this type of point of view is internal, “the estrangement devices from within a participating character’s consciousness” signify his/her uncertainty about events or characters in the story (Simpson 1993: 58) or cynicism toward them.

### **Category A: Neutral shading**

A third Category A story is the one with neutral shading. The criteria for identifying such a story is the absence of narratorial modality, which means that the narrator/reporter holds back subjective evaluation or opinions on events or characters in the story, and tells the story only through “categorical assertions” that are non-modal propositions in an epistemic sense (Simpson 1993: 49). There are few uses of *verba sentiendi* and evaluative adverbs and adjectives. So the style of neutral shading stories in Category A exhibits the “flat, unreflective, cool...and detached” narration of first person pronouns (Simpson 1993: 62, 75).

### **Category B stories**

Category B stories are first of all subdivided into two modes: narratorial and reflector. The former implies a viewing position “outside the consciousness of any of the characters,” while the latter indicates a position that is “mediated through the consciousness of a particular character” (Simpson 1993: 62). The

term “reflector” was adopted by Simpson (Simpson 1993: 55) to identify a character whose perspective is expressed in a text. The two Category B modes occur in three shadings: positive, negative, and neutral, producing a total of six types of Category B stories.

### **Category B: Narratorial mode, positive shading**

This type has a lot in common with its Category A counterpart: it has prominent deontic and boulomaic modalities of high values and evaluative adjectives and adverbs. The difference from its Category A counterpart lies in externality; the narration is in a third-person voice that adopts a position outside the consciousness of any of the characters in the story.

### **Category B: Narratorial mode, negative shading**

This type of narration is documented by “words of estrangement” and the absence of detailed description of the thought of characters. This narration type has a lot in common with Category A negative stories in that epistemic and perception modal systems are given prominence and a sense of alienation is conveyed with the use of low-value modality. In addition, there are words of estrangement to distance the reader with an external perspective or a modalizer for negative shading (Fowler 1977: 93–95; Weber 1989: 97; Simpson 1993: 42). Maynard calls them “quotative explanation markers.” These markers include, for example, “it may be that...,” “it is said that...,” or “it is supposed to be that...” These “quotative explanation” markers express varying

degrees of uncertainty or commitment on the writer's part regarding the proposition to be made (Maynard 1993: 251).

### **Category B: Narratorial mode, neutral shading**

This narratorial mode is the most impersonal, as a narrator uses little or no modalized language; there are few *verba sentiendi* or evaluative adjectives and adverbs. It lacks direct description and analysis of the thought and feelings of characters. This corresponds to objective (neutral, uninvolved) focalization as opposed to subjective or involved focalization (Rimmon-Kennan 1983: 80). This narratorial mode is supposed to be the ideal journalistic style "in terms of its factuality and objective approach" to the events and characters that journalists are trying to describe (Simpson 1993: 68).

### **Category B: Reflector mode**

Unlike Category A stories and Category B stories in the narratorial mode, this type of narration is not directly related to this study. Hence only a brief explanation is given here. Each of the three shadings of Category B reflector mode has much in common with its counterpart in the Category B narratorial mode and Category A stories when it comes to the use of modal expressions. The main difference is clearly that, in Category B reflector mode, the story is narrated in the third person through the consciousness of a reflector (Simpson 1993: 69; see the reference for more details).

### **Transitions of perspective**

Having explained these types of modes of point of view, I may need to point out that there are cases in which intracategory transpositions or crosscategory transitions of point of view take place within a text (Simpson 1993: 76–83). The former suggests a conversion of mode, for instance, from neutral through negative or positive.<sup>3)</sup> The latter implies a moving of perspective from an external to an internal mode or vice versa, such as a shift from Category A positive to Category B narratorial, positive shading. This can happen because, for instance, the positive modal shading that typifies a Category A positive mode will also be the main characteristic of its equivalent Category B narratorial (and reflector) positive modes. In the same way, Category A negative mode has estranging modal features in common with Category B narratorial and reflector counterparts. These crosscategorical similarities of the same shading are recognized, at least as far as modal patterns are concerned. Likewise, Category A neutral mode exhibits the flat and cool connotations that are held in common with its Category B narratorial and reflector counterparts. For these reasons, crosscategory transitions can take place. Actually, it would be incorrect to assume that a single text always consists of a single mode of telling throughout. The main aim of this study is rather to show that “a particular mode may dominate a text, contributing perhaps to the special ‘feel’ of the text” (Simpson 1993: 80).

#### **4. Application: The use of modal structures in media discourse**

The theoretical model and tools presented so far (modality in relation to point of view and style) will next be applied to actual media texts. It may be helpful to explain briefly the types of texts that are going to be used in relation to the issues of modality and point of view. Because newspaper genre is supposed to present itself as being neutral and objective, it is generally easy to find texts written in Category B narratorial mode. Among them, the most abundant will be those texts written in Category B narratorial mode with neutral shading. These reports intend to inform readers about events from as objective a perspective as possible. News reports written in the Category B narratorial mode with positive shading inform readers about actions that affect the readers, for example, when governmental decisions are made to obligate certain personnel to do something, or in commentaries in which certain directions or policies are suggested. Category B narratorial mode with negative shading is adopted when the news writer or participants in the news story have uncertainty about the content of the reports. Category A texts, which suggest an internal perspective, may appear in commentary sections in newspapers or magazines. Outside printed media texts, Category A mode with positive shading is particularly used in political speeches or in election campaigns when the speaker is voicing strong opinions on the course of the nation. A complete Category A mode with neutral shading is rather difficult to find in

journalistic discourse because subjectivity easily enters into the construction of personal reports. They may be partially found in witnesses' reports or (job) training reports, for example. Category A mode with negative shading may also be found in commentary sections of newspapers, for example, when the writer is uncertain or cynical about the propositional content of the report. For the sake of showing typical and relatively easily recognizable examples, this study will present an example of Category A mode with positive shading in the form of an excerpt from a speech by President Bush concerning his policy in Iraq, and two examples of Category B narratorial mode—one positive, one negative—found in newspaper reports. Let us now look at these examples.

### **Sample text of Category A: Positive shading**

The following is a portion of the transcript of President George W. Bush's televised speech "Address to the Nation" broadcast on January 10, 2007. The speech exhibits various characteristics of discourse written/spoken with an internal point of view of positive shading. In this speech the president sought to justify America's continued military presence in Iraq and called for people's support for his policy. The parts relevant to the analysis are underlined.

(Text 1)

...The situation in Iraq is unacceptable to the American



people—and it is unacceptable to me. Our troops in Iraq have fought bravely. They have done everything we have asked them to do....

It is clear that we need to change our strategy in Iraq. So my national security team, military commanders, and diplomats conducted a comprehensive review....

On September the 11 th, 2001, we saw what a refuge for extremists on the other side of the world could bring to the streets of our own cities. For the safety of our people, America must succeed in Iraq....

We will use America's full diplomatic resources to rally support for Iraq from nations throughout the Middle East. Countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf States need to understand that an American defeat in Iraq would create a new sanctuary for extremists and a strategic threat to their survival. These nations have a stake in a successful Iraq that is at peace with its neighbors, and they must step up their support for Iraq's unity government....

The challenge playing out across the broader Middle East is more than a military conflict. It is the decisive ideological struggle of our time. On one side are those who believe in freedom and moderation. On the other side are extremists

who kill the innocent, and have declared their intention to destroy our way of life. In the long run, the most realistic way to protect the American people is to provide a hopeful alternative to the hateful ideology of the enemy, by advancing liberty across a troubled region. It is in the interests of the United States to stand with the brave men and women who are risking their lives to claim their freedom, and to help them as they work to raise up just and hopeful societies across the Middle East....

Let me be clear : The terrorists and insurgents in Iraq are without conscience, and they will make the year ahead bloody and violent. Even if our new strategy works exactly as planned, deadly acts of violence will continue—and we must expect more Iraqi and American casualties. The question is whether our new strategy will bring us closer to success. I believe that it will....

(George W. Bush, “President’s Address to the Nation—The Liberty,” January 10, 2007)<sup>4)</sup>

In the above example, the point of view implied in the wording is an internal point of view of positive shading rallying the nation to feel an obligation of commitment to the president’s policy. Here, modality, as a manifestation of the interpersonal function of language, is used as a linguistic device to direct and regulate the behavior of the people. There are uses of first-person pronouns (e.

g., *I* and *we*, *my national security team*), and high-value deontic modals indicating necessity and obligation such as *must* and *need to*. The expression *our enemy* suggests the practice of dichotomizing *us* versus *them*, which also confirms the presence of an internal, subjective perspective. Evaluative adjectives or adverbs are abundantly employed, such as *brave*, *bravely*, *innocent*, *bloody and violent*, *successful*, *realistic*, *clear*, *decisive*, *deadly*, *hopeful*, and *hateful*. Among these terms, those with a positive connotation are used to refer to *us*, while those with a negative connotation are employed in reference to *them*, which ideologically enhance the dichotomizing effect between *us* and *them*. In addition, *verba sentiendi* such as *believe*, *expect*, and *understand* are found. These all are characteristic traits of discourse written/spoken with an internal point of view of positive shading. The use of these linguistic patterns adds to the whole discourse a positive and powerful connotation.

### **Sample text of Category B: Narratorial mode, positive shading**

Next we will see a sample text written in Category B narratorial mode (an external perspective). Unlike Category A texts, Category B texts are written from a position outside the consciousness of any of the participants in the story, hence a sense of externality is created. Below is an example of a text written in the Category B narratorial mode with a positive shading. As for the use of deontic modality intending to regulate the conduct of readers, this text type has much in common with

discourse narrated with Category A positive shading. The difference lies in an externality characterized by the use of objective reference instead of first-person pronouns. The following is a portion of an article on the front page of a newspaper that reports the government's new policy obliging doctors to give blood transfusions to patients under 15 years of age regardless of parental religious beliefs.

(Text 2)

“UNDER 15s MUST BE GIVEN TRANSFUSIONS DESPITE BELIEFS”

A committee comprised of the country's five medical societies has compiled a draft guideline that stipulates doctors should perform a blood transfusion during surgery on patients under 15 years of age even if their parents are Jehovah's Witnesses and refuse it because of a Biblical injunction, it was learned Saturday.

The joint committee started discussing the refusal of blood transfusions by Jehovah's Witnesses in response to requests from doctors who have said they are troubled about prioritizing either religious freedom or respect for life.

The committee judged that refusing a blood donation for children under 15 who are considered to be immature in

terms of their self-determination capabilities constitutes an abuse of parental rights....

To deal with the refusal of blood transfusions by Jehovah's Witnesses, a similar guideline compiled in 1998 by the Japan Society of Transfusion Medicine and Cell Therapy—then known as the Japan Society of Blood Transfusion—stipulates that doctors should respect a patient's wishes if he or she is 18 or older. If a patient is aged under 12, however, it said doctors should prioritize saving lives, including performing a blood transfusion during surgery, even if the child's parents are against the transfusion....

In the case of patients aged from 15 to 17, the draft guideline said that a blood transfusion should not be performed if both the patient and their parents reject it.

*(The Daily Yomiuri, June 24, 2007)*

The point of view adopted here is external with positive shading. Unlike Text 1, this text is written from a perspective detached from those involved in the story, and so the event is seen from a more objective viewpoint. The text contains deontic modal auxiliaries, *must* and *should*, which impose obligation or injunction on doctors, directing them how to deal with this controversial problem. Here, high-value modality of obligation is used. Also, modality functions to regulate the interpersonal

function, by commanding doctors in this case. The fact that the headline “Under 15s must be given transfusions despite beliefs” is in quotation marks, to indicate someone else’s words, may also confirm the external tone of this discourse. There is no use of evaluative or emotive adjectives and adverbs, as were abundantly found in Text 1. There are objective references to the names of the groups involved (i.e., through third-person narration) instead of subjective references (such as *we* or *them*).

**Sample text of Category B: Narratorial mode, negative shading**

Now we turn to a sample text written in Category B narratorial mode (an external perspective) of negative shading. This type of mode is characterized by the use of a weaker modality and externality, which is recognized by the adoption of objective references (as opposed to the use of *we/them/enemy*) and third-person telling instead of first-person telling. The following is a portion of an article on the front page of a newspaper that reports Christopher Hill, the assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, commenting on the negotiation process regarding North Korea’s nuclear disarmament.

(Text 3)

HILL: N. KOREA REACTOR MAY SHUT IN 3 WKS

North Korea could shut down its plutonium-producing reactor within three weeks, a top U.S. nuclear envoy said

Saturday, after paying a rare visit to the reclusive country.

Christopher Hill, the chief U.S. negotiator at the six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear programs, also told reporters in Tokyo that the next round of negotiations could begin in early July, before a full shutdown of the Yongbyon reactor.

Hill said the reactor would be shut down after North Korea and the International Atomic Energy Agency agree on how to monitor the process.

"We do expect this to be soon, probably within three weeks ...though I don't want to be pinned down on precisely the date," Hill said after briefing his Japanese counterpart, Kenichiro Sasae, on the outcome of his two-day surprise trip to Pyongyang.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency described the talks as "comprehensive and productive" on Saturday.

The trip, the first by a high-ranking U.S. official since October 2002, came amid growing optimism that North Korea might finally be ready to take concrete steps toward fulfilling a promise to dismantle its nuclear programs.

Hill cautioned that shutting down the reactor was just a first step.

“Shutting down the reactor won’t solve all our problems, but in order to solve our problems we need to make this beginning,” he said. “We really think this is the time to pick up the pace.”

(*The Daily Yomiuri*, June 24, 2007)

The point of view adopted in the discourse is external with negative shading. There is no use of deontic modals such as *must* or *should* to give a strong sense of commitment, as in Text 1 in particular. Instead, there is a use of such weaker epistemic modal auxiliaries as *may* or *might* and a word of estrangement, *probably*, which distances the reader, with the use of an external perspective. This is because of uncertainty or commitment on the part of Mr. Hill and the reporter as to the proposition to be made. The relative reliability of information concerning North Korea and its policy is generally shaky. For these stylistic effects, some level of objectification of the propositional content is realized. The use of quoted speeches also supports the idea of the presence of an external point of view. However, in the final paragraph of this text, an intracategory transposition, or a shift from negative to positive shading, takes place. This may be recognized by the presence of *need to* denoting obligation as in Hill’s quoted words, “we *need to* make this beginning...” At this point appears an



evaluative adverb *really* and the first person pronoun *we*, in “We really think this is the time to pick up the pace,” which are characteristic of an external, positive-shading discourse.

## 5. Conclusions

This paper was aimed at investigating the subject of modality as related to point of view. Modality is interpreted fairly broadly here as a speaker’s means of expressing an attitude toward the propositional content of the utterance he or she makes. Point of view expresses a particular way of conceiving and representing the world. This study is intended to show that a certain mode and perspective may govern a text, in such a way that they give a particular “feel” or “color” to the text. To demonstrate that the distinctive patterns of modality and point of view are adopted in media discourse to give a certain tone to the text, three texts were presented as illustrations, one from a political speech and two from newspaper articles. President Bush’s speech concerning his policy toward Iraq, as an example of a political speech, is based on Category A positive-shading narration. The speech uses frequent high-value deontic modality and emotive terms with first-person narration, to express an assertive attitude to regulate the course of the nation. It is confirmed that modality, as a realizer of the interpersonal function of language, may be used as a linguistic tool to direct and control the behavior of the people. The newspaper article concerning the government’s new policy legalizing blood transfusions for children under 15, written from a

Category B narratorial, positive shading, also uses frequent high-value deontic modality, but with almost none of the emotive kind of terms used in the president's speech. The text is written from an external point of view based on third-person narration, with the use of quotation mark for reported speeches. Hence, despite the modal similarity (positive shading) with the president's speech, its connotations differ. The final example, a newspaper article on Mr. Hill's report of negotiations regarding North Korea's nuclear disarmament, is written in Category B narratorial, negative shading, and contains quite different discoursal and modal patterns from the first two examples. In this article, lower-value epistemic and perception systems are forefronted, to which are added words of estrangement. It conveys a lower degree of certainty and commitment on the writer's part in regard to the propositional content. There is, however, an intracategorical shift of point of view—from negative to positive shading—in the latter portion of the text, as corroborated by the use of deontic modality when Mr. Hill wants to express his policy from that point of time onward. It seems safe to conclude, then, that modality, point of view, and the "feel" of a text are closely related, as shown by the above analysis of these illustrative texts.

## Notes

- 1) These two terms are distinguished by other terms such as epistemic/root (Hofmann 1979), modalization/modulation (Halliday 1970), epistemic/cognitive (Ota 1972), and

secondary/primary (Close 1975).

- 2) These are mental process verbs in transitivity, to use Halliday's terms (Halliday 1994).
- 3) Simpson argues that the intracategorical mode shift from neutral through negative or positive is easier to execute than the move from positive or negative through neutral shadings (see Simpson 1993: 79 for details).
- 4) The script of the speech is drawn from the White House's homepage: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-7.html>.

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